

# emergency contraception

EC is **safe.**  
EC is **confidential.**

*You can prevent unplanned pregnancy — even after sex!*



*To find a pharmacy or to learn about emergency contraception go to  
[www.EC-Help.org](http://www.EC-Help.org), or call 1-800-323-1336.*

# emergency contraception

## What happens next?



What you  
need to know  
about



# You can now **get EC** at a pharmacy!

*If you had sex without a condom (unprotected sex), or your birth control didn't work, or if you were forced to have sex; use emergency contraception ("EC").*

*Don't wait! The sooner you take EC the more effective it is. EC prevents pregnancy if used within 3 days after sex. New information shows that EC may work up to five days after sex, but it is less effective than if taken earlier.*

## How do I **get** EC?

In California, you don't need to visit your doctor or clinic first. You can get EC directly from a pharmacy.

1. To find a pharmacy that carries EC, or to learn more about the product, call **1-800-323-1336** or visit **[www.EC-HELP.org](http://www.EC-HELP.org)**.
2. Once you find the pharmacy, make sure you call before going. Ask to speak with a pharmacist. He or she will know if you can use EC and will answer your questions.

As a teen in California, you can get EC from a pharmacy or a clinic and you have the right to confidential family planning services.

## What do I need to **know** about EC?

Simply put, EC is a "back-up" method for regular birth control.

- EC contains the same chemicals (hormones) found in "the pill," only in higher doses.
- EC is a safe and effective way to prevent pregnancy if:
  - You had unprotected sex
  - Your birth control didn't work:
    - The condom broke during sex
    - You didn't take your birth control pills for two or more days
    - You were late for your birth control shot
  - You were forced to have sex

*Better yet, have EC on hand before an accident happens!*
- EC is for emergency use only. It should not take the place of regular birth control methods, such as "the pill," condoms, the birth control shot, etc.

## How does EC **work**?

EC works by:

- Stopping an egg from being released
- Preventing fertilization of an egg
- Stopping a fertilized egg from attaching to the uterus
- EC is NOT the same as RU-486 (the abortion pill). EC will not cause an abortion.
- EC does not protect you from sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV/AIDS. Protect you and your partner by always using a condom during sex.

